

Remarks/Arguments:

Response to Interview Summary

The Interview Summary mailed on February 14, 2011 requested a statement of the substance of the Interview. Applicants wish to thank the Examiner for forwarding additional relevant pages of the Milliken reference that describe the meaning of the variable " T_{in} ".

Claim Status

Claims 12-23 are currently pending.

Claim Rejections Under 35 U.S.C. §103

Claims 12-17 and 20-22 stand rejected under 35 USC §103(a) as unpatentable over Milliken et al. "Race car Vehicle Dynamics," (1995) in view of US-PGPUB 2004/0133330 to Ono. Claims 18 and 19 stand rejected under 35 USC §103(a) as unpatentable over Milliken in view of Ono and further in view of U.S. Patent No. 6,751,539 to Uenuma. Claim 23 stands rejected under 35 USC §103(a) as unpatentable over Milliken in view of Ono and further in view of US-PGPUB 2004/0024504 to Saib. Applicants respectfully traverse the rejection of these claims.

The references, considered either alone or in combination, do not disclose or suggest all of the features of independent claim 12. "To establish a prima facie case of obviousness, ... the prior art reference (or references when combined) must teach or suggest all the claim limitations." M.P.E.P. §2143.

Sole independent claim 12 recites a "[m]ethod for calculating the lateral force in a motor vehicle with an electromechanical or electrohydraulic steering system, the method comprising: recording a steering rod force of the vehicle; calculating a total restoring torque from the steering rod force by a calculation unit of the vehicle, with the said total restoring torque comprising a restoring torque generated by lateral force and other restoring torques; quantitatively determining, by the calculation unit of the vehicle, the other restoring torques based on measured values; subtracting the other restoring torques from the total restoring torque for determining the restoring torque generated by the lateral force by the calculation unit of the vehicle; and determining the lateral force from the restoring torque generated by the lateral force by the calculation unit of the vehicle." These steps are neither disclosed nor suggested by the cited references.

Page 3 of the Office Action contends that the variable " T_{in} " that appears on page 74 of Milliken is analogous to the claimed steering rod force. The Office Action then concludes that it would be obvious to arrive at the method steps recited in claim 12 (*other than the recording step for which Ono is relied upon*) because Milliken teaches that the variable T_{in} is a function of lateral force F_y and other restoring torques such as M_z (see Equations 2.1 and 2.2).

The Office Action's characterization of the variable T_{in} is not correct. Page 74 of Milliken does not identify the meaning of the variable T_{in} . Pages 64 and 65 of the Milliken reference reveal that T_{in} actually refers to input wheel torque. Input wheel torque is not analogous to steering rod force or steering rod torque. Input wheel torque relates to the rotation of a vehicle wheel about its axis of rotation, i.e., the torque generated by an automobile engine to rotate a vehicle wheel of the automobile. Steering rod force is generated, at least in part, by the driver of the vehicle turning a steering wheel of the vehicle. Because input wheel torque T_{in} is not analogous to steering rod force, there is no reason to combine the teachings of the Milliken and Ono references, as set forth in the Office Action, to arrive at the claimed invention that is recited in claim 12.

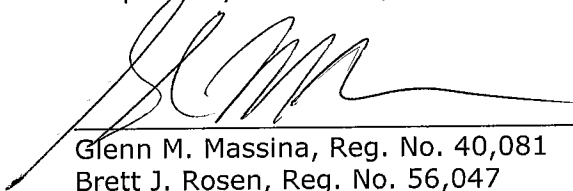
Additionally, the Office Action has not provided a reason for combining the teachings of the Milliken and Ono references. "The key to supporting any rejection under 35 U.S.C. 103 is the clear articulation of the reason(s) why the claimed invention would have been obvious." M.P.E.P. §2143. Page 4 of the Office Action states that "it would have been obvious to a person of ordinary skill in the art to use Ono's teaching in Smith (...)" Applicants believe that the Office Action's reference to "Smith" is a typographical error.

The Uenuma, Ono and Saib references do not overcome the deficiencies of the Milliken reference. Reconsideration of claim 12 and the rejected claims that depend from claim 12 is respectfully requested.

Conclusion

Applicants respectfully submit that this application is now in condition for allowance, which action is respectfully requested. If the Examiner believes an interview, either personal or telephonic, will advance the prosecution of this application, it is respectfully requested that the Examiner contact the undersigned to arrange the same.

Respectfully submitted,



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